

# TIBETAN BUDDHISM AND THE GREAT GAME

*Tibet has been a locus in The Great Game for control of the Indo-Himalayan and Central Asian regions since the late 19th century, and its Tibetan Buddhist leaders continue to be players rather than pawns.*

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*What is the position of Tibetan Buddhism in the global geopolitical game, and what do some of the West's leading pro-Buddhist writers have to say about it? You might be very surprised!*

## The Compassion Contradiction: Tibet Under Tibetan Buddhist Rule

It is late on a dark night. An urgent warning is raised: "They are coming to kill you." A beloved Asian spiritual leader is roused from bed and he sleepily stumbles around his lamasery gathering sacred artworks and a few personal belongings. He pauses momentarily to reassure, kiss and comfort crying faithful disciples who wish to accompany him, but he will not allow them. They can follow him in secret later, when it is safer. Freshly saddled horses arrive at the front door. He is hurriedly hustled onto a horse and his small entourage disappears into the night. A short time later, two battalions of armoured soldiers gallop in the direction of his flight.

Was this the night of the flight of the 14th Dalai Lama to India in 1959? No. It was the flight of the Penchen Lama, the philosophical leader and co-regent of Tibet (*Penchen*, or *Panchen*, means "learned philosopher"). The year was 1923, and he was forced to flee Tibet for his life. He was not in fear of the Chinese: he fled to them knowing that they had a large Buddhist population and that he would be protected. He was forced to flee from the 13th Dalai Lama, the political leader of Tibet, who had sent his soldiers with orders to kill the Penchen Lama on sight and show no compassion.

## Nicholas Roerich's Observations

Am I making up this story? No. It is taken from the third chapter, particularly pages 46 and 47, of Nicholas Roerich's famous 1930 book *Shambhala*. Roerich said that the Penchen Lama was planning sweeping religious reforms throughout Tibet in order to do away with despotic lamaistic practices and re-implement more pure Buddhist practices. He suggested this as the possible reason for this attack on the Penchen Lama by the Dalai Lama. As a pro-Buddhist writer, Nicholas Roerich enumerated this event in detail as well as many other grievances of the Tibetan people "as evidence for a coming internal civil war by Tibetans against Lhasa".

On account of all of the distasteful things described in this chapter, Nicholas Roerich, as well as many Buddhists from other nations, refused to call the national religion of Tibet "Buddhism". Roerich had travelled through much of Asia and had studied Buddhism in every country he visited. He claimed that this despotic religion of Tibet bore no resemblance to Buddhism. He preferred to call it "lamaism", as do many other Buddhists who wrote to me after reading my previous article in *NEXUS* (vol. 12, no. 4). David Richardson, who wrote to me on 2 December 2005, is typical of these:

"Dear Dr D'Montford,

"I read your article 'Unveiling Bloody Buddhism' and found some of the practices shocking. I had some idea of the esoteric culture of Tibetan Buddhists. Your evidence highlights for me the fact that this is an erroneous teaching of Buddhism. I feel it highly dangerous to even call the religion 'Buddhist'.

"I am an active practitioner of the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin, the practice being based on the highest of Sakyamuni's teachings, the Lotus Sutra.

"The Buddhism which you describe is *not* Buddhism... I believe Tibetan Buddhism is a cultural mish-mash of indigenous pagan/shamanistic/Bon practices and is also

polytheistic. I stress: it's *not* Buddhism... I'm sure, anthropologically, [these] ancient esoteric rituals are fascinating but they are definitely non-Buddhist...

"Thank you for your article. It has completely confirmed the danger of the Tibetan tradition clearly. It also has made me realise on a deeper level the truth and beauty of my Buddhist practice and a greater commitment to raise awareness and refute erroneous teachings."

### Alexandra David-Néel's Observations

During her travels in Tibet, Alexandra David-Néel observed things which she had difficulty relating to Buddhism. She wrote of these in her books *My Journey to Lhasa* (1927) and *Initiation and Initiates in Tibet* (1959). Concurring with Roerich's account of the expulsion of the Penchen Lama by the Dalai Lama and contradicting the official Western account of his having been abducted by the Chinese, she wrote in *Initiations...* (chapter 11, "The Dalai Lama", p. 149):

"The Tashi [the Western colloquial term for Tsang Penchen Rimpoche or the Penchen Lama] Lama is a learned, enlightened and liberal-minded man. People who are not in the least acquainted with him...say that he is the enemy of foreigners...he is a Buddhist and pacifist and does not encourage those who increase each year the taxes paid by the poorest villagers in order to support the ridiculous army they have been led to organise [by the British] to serve the interest of those who seized their land... If he had been the ruler of Tibet, instead of being compelled to fly from Tashi Lhumpo [the lamasery of the Penchen Lama] to save his life, he would have gladly opened the country to explorers, savants and all honest and well-meaning travellers.

"...The role of the Tashi Lama is identical to that of the Dalai Lama... temporal rulers of Tibet... The practical results of the difference [i.e., one being the secular leader and one being the philosophical leader] are considerable. This was ascertained when the present Tashi Lama was compelled to flee Tibet to escape from his powerful colleague."

So with the spiritual head removed and the political head, the Dalai Lama, left to take the nation's reigns, it is no wonder that Tibet has been such a willing participant in "The Great Game".

With the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Tibet became an important bulwark, the "forbidden land" for the British Empire against further encroachment in Asia by a communist nation.

A French national, Alexandra David-Néel was expelled from Tibet by the British several times. She said of this:

"Although we were yet in that part of Tibet still under Chinese rule, wherein foreigners can travel freely, though at their own risk, it was important that rumours of my wanderings in the

neighbourhood of the border should not spread [to the British]...What right had they to erect barriers around a country which was not even lawfully theirs?" (*Initiations...*, op. cit.)

When she was expelled, the Chinese welcomed her into their Buddhist monasteries, from where she would plan her next travels into the British "forbidden land". This is very different from the official story that it was the Chinese or Tibetan governments which forbade foreigners to travel in Tibet.

### Is Tibetan Independence the Issue?

Roerich, David-Néel and many other writers have exposed the atrocities committed by the Tibetan Buddhist society before the re-establishment of Chinese rule.

"Re-establishment of Chinese rule?" I hear you ask. Wasn't Tibet invaded by the despotic Chinese in 1950, and aren't all aware people trying to "free Tibet"?

This is the official, one-sided, propaganda story that is propagated by the "'Big Brother' press of the West", as pointed out by Dr Norman Williams (see below). The truth is very different. I encourage you to check the facts quoted in his article. The sooner that more people wake up to the fact that we have only been getting one side of the story about what is and has happened in Tibet, the sooner they will realise that there are other hidden agendas at work behind this scenario. Otherwise, they will just be reacting unquestioningly to whatever they're told. The propensity for knee-jerk reactions makes people easy to manipulate.

Always question everything and follow up the questions with some research. It is necessary to familiarise yourself with the history of Tibet so that you can step away from manipulation by either side of this debate. My article last year in *NEXUS* covered some of this history in brief. Chapters 5-8 in my book *Unveiling Tibetan*

*Buddhist Propaganda and Atrocities* cover the history of Tibet in some detail from the viewpoint of sources within and outside of Tibet. Alternatively, as was recently pointed out by Dr Norman Williams in his article "The Truth About Tibet" in *New Dawn* magazine, a brief overview of Tibet's history "can be sourced in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*".

Check for yourself all the sources I quote in the article. Do not take my or anyone else's word about political conditions in any country at face value.

The issue of "Tibet's independence" did not arise until the Opium War of 1840, which began the foreign invasion of China by the West, after which the British tried to separate Tibet from China. This marked the rise in the great spy networks which began with Queen Elizabeth I of England in the 1600s (see Laurence Gardner's *Realm of the Ring Lords*, chapter 14, pp. 187-188). Thus began "The Great Game" involving the Indo-Himalayan region.



Born in Saint-Mandé, Paris, on 24 October 1868, explorer Alexandra David-Néel died in Digne on 8 September 1969. (Source: Wason Collection on East Asia, Cornell University Library)

## Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*

The term "The Great Game" was popularised by Rudyard Kipling in his 1901 spy novel *Kim* (first published in serial form in 1900–1901). It tells the story of a Lahore street urchin called Kim (Kimball O'Hara), the orphaned son of a British soldier. Kim incidentally makes contact with the British Secret Service and becomes the disciple of a Tibetan lama, who also ends up working for the British agent. Kim accidentally learns about "The Great Game"—the political power conflict in Central Asia, particularly over Tibet and Afghanistan—and is recruited by the British. Kim's father's regimental chaplain recognises a Masonic symbol worn by Kim, and soon Kim is sent away to a top English school. He is trained in espionage—one technique involving studying a tray full of mixed objects and then noting which ones have been periodically added or taken away. This method is still used for training spies and is called "Kim's Game". Later, Kim rejoins the lama and together they travel to the Himalayas, this time with Kim capturing papers from Russian spies while the lama is on a spiritual quest. At the end of the novel, Kim sees no need to decide between the spiritual and the espionage at which he excels.

In this 1901 book, Tibetan lamas were already being implicated as players in The Great Game. (By the way, the British double agent Harold "Kim" Philby took his nickname from the novel's hero.) It is interesting that over 100 years later, these same players are still at work and arguing over the same pieces of dirt, still using the same methods, each trying to convince the rest of the world that it is right. In more than a century, things have not really changed.

Though often overlooked, the novel *Kim* is a significant work, recognised as influencing the writings of other famous authors including, but not limited, to:

- Robert A. Heinlein, whose novel *Citizen of the Galaxy* details the memorisation technique;
- John Masters, whose *The Lotus and the Wind*, which is also set in The Great Game, has as one of its main protagonists a character seeking some form of spiritual enlightenment;
- Laurie R. King, a popular contemporary author who wrote a novel called *The Game* which quotes Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's work and in which their respective famous characters Mary Russell and the detective Sherlock Holmes go to Tibet to rescue a now mature Kim;
- Peter Hopkirk, whose *Quest for Kim: In Search of Kipling's Great Game* discusses the real-life personages who may have inspired its characters.

Let's shed a little light on the truth behind the fictional stories surrounding this long-running Great Game.

## The Great Game in Afghanistan

"The Great Game" is a term, originally attributed to British intelligence officer Arthur Conolly (1807–1842), to describe the rivalry and strategic conflict between the British Empire and the

Tsarist Russian Empire for supremacy in Central Asia. In the Eastern Bloc, this conflict was known as "The Tournament of Shadows".

Though some say that The Great Game commenced in the 1600s, it began in earnest at the start of the 19th century when Imperial Russian expansion threatened to collide with the increasing British dominance of the occupied lands of the Indian sub-continent. The original centre of activity was in Afghanistan, Russia's near neighbour, as the British feared that Afghanistan would become a staging post for a Russian invasion of India.

Though Afghanistan has been the scene of many modern conflicts, its first war with the West was in 1838 with the First Anglo-Afghan War. Four years later, in 1842, the British retreated to India. After the Indian rebellion of 1857, successive British governments saw Afghanistan as a buffer state in much

the same way that Tibet is viewed as a buffer between China and the West today. During 1865 to 1868 and again in 1878, the Russians tried to annex parts of Afghanistan formerly controlled by the British. Tensions again renewed, resulting in the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–1880. The British pulled out again in 1881, leaving Abdur Rahman Khan on the throne. He agreed to let the British maintain Afghanistan's foreign policy while he consolidated his position. He managed to suppress internal rebellions with ruthless efficiency and brought much of the country under central control.

The Russians seized the Oasis of Merv in 1884 and again began to fight Afghan troops. On the brink of war between the two great powers, the British decided to accept the Russian possession. In 1907, the Joint Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission delineated a permanent northern Afghanistan frontier, without any Afghan say in the matter. The Russians accepted that the politics of Afghanistan were solely under British control, as long as the British guaranteed not to change the regime.

Russia agreed to conduct all political relations with Afghanistan through the British. The British agreed that they would maintain the current borders and actively discourage any attempt by Afghanistan to encroach on Russian territory.

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 nullified existing treaties and a second phase of The Great Game began. The Third Anglo-Afghan War erupted in 1919 when Afghanistan attacked British India's northern frontier. Afghanistan was granted self-determination in foreign affairs and, in May 1921, signed a Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet republic. Great Britain imposed minor sanctions and diplomatic slights as a response to the treaty. In 1923, Afghanistan responded by offering refuge for Muslims who had fled the Soviet Union and Indian nationals in exile from the British Empire. In 1928, the Afghan king abdicated under pressure, and both the Soviets and the British played the circumstances to their advantage and re-established a military interest in the area.

World War II saw the temporary alignment of British and

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Soviet interests. In 1940, both governments pressured Afghanistan for the removal of a large number of German espionage agents.

### Behind The New Great Game

With the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War, the United States of America displaced Great Britain as the global power, asserting its influence in the Middle East in pursuit of oil and access to other resources as well as containment of the Soviet Union.

This period is sometimes referred to as "The New Great Game" by commentators, and there are references in the military, security and diplomatic communities to "The Great Game" as an analogy or framework for events involving India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tibet and, more recently, the post-Soviet republics of Central Asia. Its machinations can be seen in the military history of Iran, European influence in Afghanistan, geostrategy in Central Asia, petroleum politics and globalisation.

In The New Great Game, psychology, ideals, ideologies and beliefs are more important than brute strength and information gathering.

Following the war, the government of Tibet, at that time being the Tibetan Buddhist leaders—primarily the Gelugpas or Yellow Hat sect, of which the Dalai Lama is the political, not religious, head—became actively involved in the "second phase" of The Great Game and in "The New Great Game" with the United States.

Recall, however, that The Great Game had shifted for a while so that the British and Russian empires teamed up against a new third player, Germany. The German agents captured in Afghanistan were there in support of the German expeditions in Tibet. Nazi Germany sent seven expeditions to Tibet, the most famous one by Austrian SS members Heinrich Harrer and Peter Aufschnaiter, now best known through the biography and film *Seven Years in Tibet*.

The other infamous expedition is the one in 1938–39 led by Ernst Schäfer. Himmler, leader of the Nazi's SS and the second-most-powerful man in the Third Reich, sent Schäfer's expedition, which included a zoologist, an anthropologist and several other scientists, to Tibet on the eve of war to examine Tibetan nobles for signs of Aryan physiology, undermine the British relationship with the ruling class and sow the seeds of rebellion among the populace. The official story is that Himmler sponsored this expedition supposedly on the basis of his belief in the role of eugenics and physical anthropology and on the work of Felix von Luschan. In 1922, von Luschan issued 10 statements about anthropology, such as: "There are no savages, there are only different cultures. The real barbarians are those ignorant white men who are unable to fathom other races and who exploit them..." (This is quoted in Klein and Takahata's textbook *Where Do We Come From?*)

There is also a less popularised, but more important, reason for interest in this region by both of the players in The Great Game.

There has long been a legend that the next world leader would come from the northwestern Tibetan region from a hidden, mystical, Camelot-style land called Shambhala. There are many names for this leader. The indigenous Tibetans call him Gesar Khan (the Romans took their term "Caesar" from the name of this legendary ruler) and await his return. The Hindus call him the Chakravartin, the next incarnation of Vishnu. The Buddhists call him Rigden-jyepo, the Kalki King. These equate to the return of King Arthur or Jesus Christ, the Jewish messiah, and to the prophecies of the next great Islamic leader, etc. This is the theme of Roerich's book *Shambhala*. The Nazis had an enthusiasm for Shambhala, too, where they hoped to find an ancient Nordic master race in a remote area "unspoiled" by Buddhism.

Therefore, if the legend is to be believed, it follows that by controlling that area you can control the possible future leader of humankind. On the strength of this concept, groups of Tibetan lamas were taken back to live in Berlin so they could give instruction in these matters. It became a popular concept that Hitler was the next Chakravartin or Kalki King who would bring real order in Europe. It then became necessary to try to establish Aryan links to this area to give this story validity within the Nazi ideological framework. Academics still write papers on the correlations between the indigenous Gesar Khan tales and the legends of Siegfried and Arthur.

These doctrines of Nazi cosmology became so readily assimilated in Europe that Tibet became, and continues to be, an important locus of Western spiritual projections, including but not limited to the following esoteric and practical matters:

- Darwin's 1859 theory of evolution was prompted by the Tibetan legend that all men came from eight tribes of

apes;

- Blavatsky's Council of Ascended Masters in Tibet, since first "transmitting" in 1870, has had an influence that has filtered through the entire New Age movement;

- Rudolf Hess and Rudolf von Sebottendorf organised the German secret society Thule-Gesellschaft, established in 1919 upon lamaist teachings;

- Karl Haushofer founded the Institute for Geopolitics in Munich in 1922;

- The United Nations owes its establishment in 1945 to the popularity of these assimilated cosmologies.

These facts are pointed out in many contemporary history books including Christopher Hale's *Himmler's Crusade: The Nazi Expedition to Find the Origins of the Aryan Race*, which asks penetrating questions about the relationship between science and politics.

This assimilation for the purposes of political manipulation is largely due to the influence of political manoeuvres like Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband and Nicholas Roerich, who seized upon the inspiring power and political effectiveness of such ideals. It should be remembered that although Roerich, a

**Nazi Germany sent seven expeditions to Tibet, the most famous one by Austrian SS members Heinrich Harrer and Peter Aufschnaiter, now best known through the biography and film *Seven Years in Tibet*.**

Russian national, produced wonderful works of art and wrote many beautiful books on Tibet (which were very similar to those written by Younghusband), he did so for the same reasons as his counterpart.

Roerich's political manoeuvrings in The Great Game saw him established as adviser to minister for agriculture and US vice-presidential candidate Henry A. Wallace and put on the US Government payroll, which funded his trips to Tibet in 1926 and 1928, partnered by the Soviet agent Yakov Blumkin. The official propaganda excuse for these US-funded trips to Great Game Central was for Roerich to bring back experimental samples of drought-resistant grasses. Roerich's reasons for these trips in his writings were:

- to examine ancient Zhang Zhung texts;
- to explore the Sotlej Valley, Tibet, Mongolia, northeastern China and certain valleys of southern Siberia;
- to discover the location of Shambhala, from which will emerge the 25th Kalki King with a huge army and super-weapons to vanquish the corrupt and usher in a worldwide Golden Age.

These are nearly identical to the reasons for the Nazi SS expeditions.

Roerich convinced Wallace to get Henry Morgenthau, Jr, secretary of the Treasury, to add the symbol of the pyramid with the All-Seeing Eye to the US one-dollar bill, which he did in 1934. Wallace was also able to get President Roosevelt and delegates from 21 nations to sign the Roerich Pact in 1935, which led to the establishment of the United Nations as well as Camp David, originally named "Shambhala" (which supposedly miraculously avoided disaster on 9/11). Find more about Roerich's part in The Great Game in the book *Tournament of Shadows*, by Karl Meyer and Shareen Blair Brysac.

Though most of the West retains glowing feelings for the Tibetan Buddhists, Germany's love affair with all things Tibetan Buddhist has not lasted. In Munich in May 2000, the media accused the Dalai Lama of:

- deliberately falsifying the history of Tibet;
  - maintaining personal and working relationships with former members of the SS (Heinrich Harrer and others) and Neo-Nazis;
  - defaming critics;
  - conducting misogynistic rituals;
  - having an undemocratic and autocratic leadership style;
  - suppressing any political opposition;
- and
- actively repressing religious minorities.

The faces of the players changed after World War II, but the old conflicts remained. The United States replaced the British Empire as the public face of the Western forces, yet the struggles remained in the same areas for the same reasons.

China eventually replaced Germany as

the third wheel in The Great Game. The older opponents then allied themselves against this new player.

### Tibetan Spies on Both Sides

There is an increasing number of books on the market that highlight Tibet's part in this Great Game. One such book, *The Struggle for Modern Tibet* by Goldstein et al. (1997), is written about Tsering, a Tibetan national recruited into The Great Game in much the same way as described in the book *Kim*. The great thing about this story is that it complicates our view of modern Tibet. It begins to show the difference between the simplistic, altruistic stories we have been told and what really happened

there. Born in 1929 in a Tibetan village, Tsering developed a strong dislike of his country's theocratic ruling elite. As a 13-year-old member of the Dalai Lama's personal dance troupe, he was frequently whipped or beaten by teachers for minor infractions. Although heterosexual, he escaped the country by becoming a *drombo*, or homosexual passive partner and sex toy, for a well-connected monk. After studying at the University of Washington, he returned to Chinese-occupied Tibet in 1964. This unusual story also suggests a middle

way between authoritarian Chinese rule and a return to Tibet's old despotic order.

*A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Political Life and Times of Bapa Phüntso Wangye* by Goldstein et al. (2004) details the life of a Tibetan national, Phunwang, recruited for the other side of The Game. As a teenager, Phunwang eagerly joined a Chinese-run program designed to train ethnic minorities for government work. A natural-born leader, he was convinced that communism was the key to better lives for Tibet's poor and started the Tibetan Communist Party, earning praise from both the Dalai Lama and Mao Zedong. Yet he was expelled from Tibet in 1940, and for

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Heinrich Harrer (1912–2006) is pictured with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who presented him with the International Campaign for Tibet's Light of Truth Award in Graz, Austria, on 15 October 2002

the next nine years he worked to organise a guerrilla uprising. In 1949, before the Chinese invasion, he merged his Tibetan Communist Party with Mao's Chinese Communist Party. He played an important role in the party's administrative organisation in Lhasa, and as he was fluent in Chinese and comfortable with Chinese culture he was made the translator for the young Dalai Lama during his famous 1954–55 meetings with Mao Zedong. In the 1950s, Phunwang was the highest-ranking Tibetan official within the Communist Party in Tibet.

So there were Tibetan Buddhists who were spies within Tibet for either side of this Great Game.

### The CIA's Secret Campaign in Tibet

We also have the first-hand accounts of several US spies within Tibet who were playing out this New Great Game, too.

"That the free Tibetan community has been able to survive and even thrive...and the Tibetan issue has a higher profile today than at any time since the 1959 flight of the Dalai Lama, is owed in no small part to the secret assistance channelled by the United States..." This quote is taken from the book *The CIA's Secret War In Tibet*, by former CIA agents Kenneth Conboy and James Morrison, which details matters such as:

- the CIA's secret campaign in Tibet was a vital part of contemporary Tibetan history;
- the CIA's radio agents aided the Dalai Lama to arrive safely in exile;
- in his early years on Indian soil, the Dalai Lama relied on CIA assistance to get settled; and
- though the CIA-supported guerrilla army in Mustang proved ineffectual on the ground, the mere fact that there were Tibetan troops under arms was a significant boost to morale in the refugee community.

The Great Game took a different swing when uranium was discovered in Tibet. Thomas Laird has written an interesting book called *Into Tibet*, detailing his work as the CIA's first nuclear spy and his secret mission into Lhasa. China invaded that land in 1950, accusing Tibet of playing into the hands of

enemy imperial powers. Laird suggests that the communist government may have had a point. He cites his reconstruction of a little-documented CIA mission into Tibet that was intended, at least in part, to keep the country's uranium stores from falling into Russian hands.

As proof of this, Laird traces the story of two CIA agents, Douglas Mackiernan and Frank Bessac, sent on an intelligence expedition to Tibet in 1949–1950 at the height of US concern about the Soviet Union's nuclear experiments and the spread of communism in China. Mackiernan, who was killed during the mission, was the first undercover CIA agent to die in the line of duty, and Bessac, with several other cohorts, trekked through Tibet on foot, gathering nuclear intelligence and establishing regional contacts. The mission was part of a US attempt to arm Tibet, and Laird argues that the American presence may have precipitated China's invasion of the country. The US abruptly abandoned Tibet by cutting off covert funding after establishing diplomatic relations with China in the 1970s. It then abandoned the Tibetan freedom fighters, many of whom were monks and were arrested by the Chinese. The mission was a failure on all counts, and the surviving participants were carefully hidden away. Half a century later, the CIA will not "confirm or deny" that Douglas Mackiernan was "shot dead on the borders of Tibet and Sinkiang", as much of the source material remains classified.

Is it possible that the monks and nuns imprisoned by the Chinese during this period may not have been imprisoned because of religious reasons at all? It does seem strange to me that China, with a large Buddhist population, even under communist rule, would take exception to Buddhist religious practices. Arresting people who practise the same religion as you but who are trying to overthrow the government makes more sense. What could they gain by lying and claiming religious persecution as the only reason for their arrest? What has a supposedly pacifist religion gained from participating in this great political play?

The Tibetan Buddhists have achieved a massive spread in Tibetan Buddhism. All these factors helped carry the diaspora and its leadership through the darkest years of exile when their cause might otherwise have been forgotten. In addition, their coffers have been filled with world currency and they have gained immense political clout by creating and actively participating in a collective victim-consciousness and psychology of suffering, even though these things seem to run contrary to the Buddha's doctrines.

Where would they learn such methods? It began with the invasion of Tibet by Colonel Younghusband.

### Younghusband's Influence

Colonel Sir Francis Edward Younghusband (1863–1942) was a very interesting character. He was a distinguished British Army officer, mountaineer and explorer as well as the youngest member of the Royal Geographic Society, receiving its coveted gold medal in 1890 at the age of twenty-seven. He worked in the Indian arm of the British Secret Service and then became a political reformer and the first to campaign for



Members of the (Sikkim) Tibet Mission Force (escort to Colonel Younghusband's Mission to Tibet, 1903–04). Younghusband is seated in the centre of the photograph, wearing the fur coat and hat. © Royal Geographical Society

"human rights" under that name. He also founded the World Congress of Faiths in 1936 and authored many books on spiritual topics. Oh, and did I mention that in 1904 he invaded Tibet?

In his own writings, he openly described his involvement in The Great Game five years before he invaded Tibet. In 1889, Younghusband was the commanding officer of a famous Gurkha regiment which surveyed the Hunza Valley, and he was one of the first to report on the longevity and virility of the people living there. While he was based in Hunza, a messenger came to his camp, inviting him to dinner with Captain Gromchevsky, the man he describes as his "Russian counterpart in The Great Game". Younghusband accepted, and after dinner the two rivals talked into the night, sharing brandy and vodka and discussing the possibility of a Russian invasion of British India.

Transferred in 1890 to the Indian Political Service, an arm of the British Secret Service, Younghusband served as a political officer on secondment to the British Army. From 1902 to 1904 he was British Commissioner to Tibet. In 1903–04, he led a military mission to Tibet as a result of fears that the Tibetans were harbouring Russian war criminals who had stockpiles of illegal Russian weapons that they were using in disputes over the Sikkim–Tibet border. Sound familiar? The mission controversially became a *de facto* invasion and British forces occupied Lhasa. The invasion was brutal and quick, with the invading force sustaining few casualties. This was due to the terrifying power of the new *Maxim* machine-guns used by Younghusband's forces. The Tibetans did not have any Russian weapons of mass destruction, only old muskets. The *Maxim* guns mowed them down like grass, and the survivors quickly surrendered.

The invasion also paid for itself. The Tibetan government agreed to pay the equivalent of £500,000 over 75 years to cover the costs. A British trade office was established in the country and a frontier valley was to host a British force until the indemnity was paid off. The British force was supported by King Ugyen Wangchuck of Bhutan, who was knighted in return for his services.

Ironically, when Younghusband returned to Britain he launched his patriotic "Fight for Right" campaign in 1915; it was the beginning of the human rights movement as we know it today and the first to use and popularise the term "human rights". Before World War I, the term was not in use. In reality it became a front for world war propaganda, as the campaign's main work appears to have been to commission flyers and letters from reputable members of society that extolled Britain's moral rectitude for participating in war. The Fight for Right campaign commissioned the hymn *Jerusalem* as its anthem. This pro-war propaganda fighting song was such an "inspiration" to this new human rights movement that it has become one of England's most popular patriotic songs, often being used as an alternative anthem. It is the official anthem of the British National Party and the British Women's Institute and is sung at British sporting events.

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**This was the ill-fated 1905 expedition which included a young Aleister Crowley, a self-confessed British secret agent.**

Younghusband kept an active interest in Tibet until his death in 1942, under the cover of sponsoring attempts to climb Mount Everest and other Himalayan mountains and claim them for the British Empire. One of the first climbing groups to get Younghusband's "approval" to enter the "forbidden" country was just after his invasion of Tibet. This was the ill-fated 1905 expedition which included a young Aleister Crowley, a self-confessed British secret agent. Crowley openly participated in drug-induced conditioning, reconditioning and suggestion experiments with his groups in Italy. These techniques became essential components of a new generation of strategic warfare.

Younghusband maintained British sway in Tibet until his death. Due to his influence, Tibet became and remained the forbidden country. It was during the time of Younghusband's greatest influence that the Penchen Lama—the one person best positioned to call a nation to its senses and oppose Tibet's participation in a game that ran contrary to Buddhist spiritual practice—was chased out of Tibet by the 13th Dalai Lama. Did Younghusband achieve this by great force? No! He achieved it by minimal force and cost, but maintained it by maximum use of other methods. He was adept at using political tools: songs, spirituality, exploration, human rights campaigns, sporting events, crippling debt, subterfuge, alliances, silent removal of opposition and, above all, the art of misdirection of blame.

These political tools were readily absorbed by the new leader of the Tibetan government who, incidentally, was being trained for his job while Younghusband was deploying this new generation of warfare methods. It must be remembered that the Dalai Lama is the political head of Tibet. In a mode similar to that set out in Plato's *Republic*, the 13th Dalai Lama would have been trained from an early age in all of the skills required to be an effective political leader. This training would have included these less-than-honourable skills of this new statecraft.

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